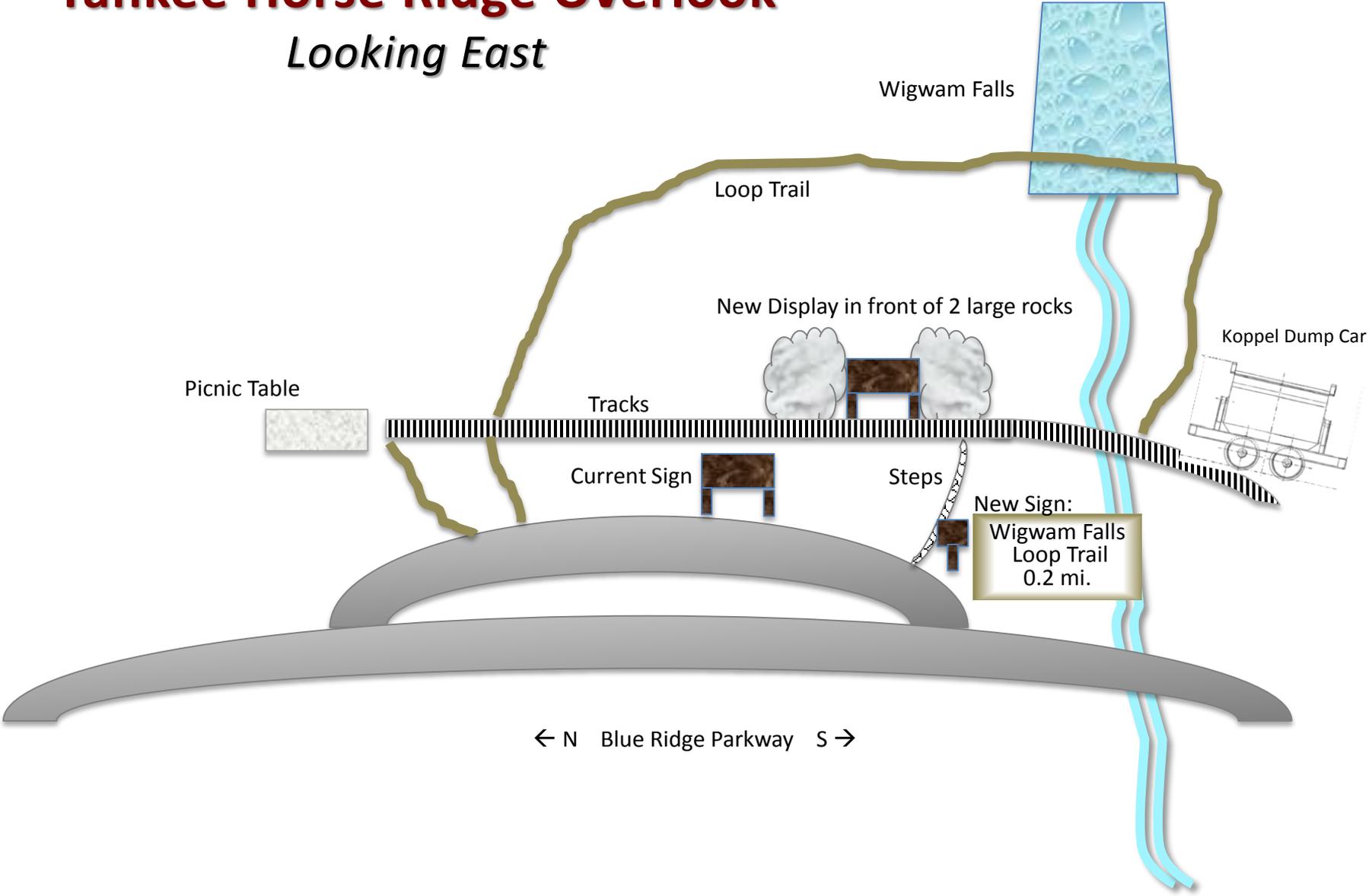


Yankee Horse Ridge Overlook

Looking East



24 x 36" panel Drawing: ¼ scale

Invented in 1893, the small, geared Climax locomotive was considered advanced technology for its time. With power transferred simultaneously to each set of wheels, it provided a means to negotiate rugged terrain on very rough and uneven tracks, and thereby created opportunities for logging companies to traverse the steep slopes of the Blue Ridge. Able to reach speeds up to 15 miles per hour, the Climax locomotives of the Irish Creek Railway typically used lightweight 20-pound steel rails. This short reconstructed section was typical of the period. It was 42" gauge, commonly referred to as Pennsylvania lumberman's gauge, or less elegantly, "bastard gauge." The extracted cut lumber was transferred to the South River Lumber Company mill in Cornwall, VA for subsequent distribution to fuel America's growth and increasing demand for building materials. With the subsequent creation of public lands, the Blue Ridge Parkway planners, in laying out the road nearby, used sections of the bed of the Irish Creek Railway.

Local Extraction Industries included Mining and Lumbering

Irish Creek Tin Mines

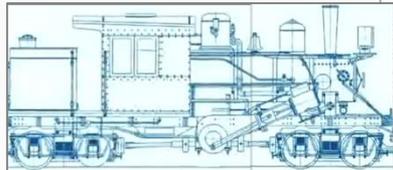
With the discovery of tin ore on Irish Creek shortly after the Civil War, a charter was issued for the Irish Creek Mining and Development Company, led by Robert E. Lee Jr., youngest son of the general. A processing center was built, creating the village of Cornwall, named for the famous Cornwall tin mines of England. The tin ore was mined in 1883-1885, 1889-1892, and 1918-1919 with an operation consisting of over forty testing pits, trenches, shafts, and tunnels that are distributed over a territory nearly 10 miles wide by 4 miles long.



1919: workman at entrance to Mine No. 1



1890 Company stock certificate



Building upon the success of its initial locomotive, the Climax Manufacturing Co. developed a new "Class B" locomotive that was gear driven with the drive shaft centrally located under the locomotive with a horizontal boiler and two cylinders mounted on the sides of the frame. All weight was carried on two trucks and available for adhesion. The weight of these locomotives ranged from 18 to 79 tons. It could reach speeds up to 15 miles per hour.

The Irish Creek Railway



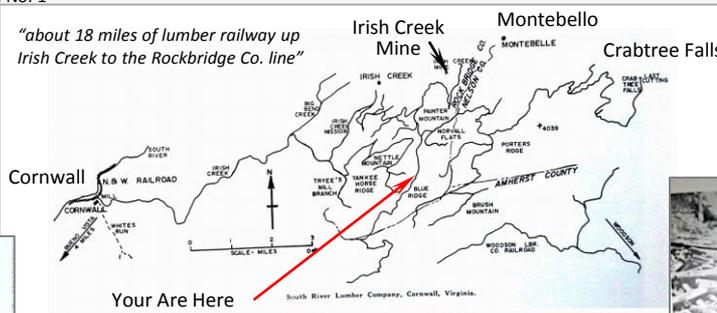
Surveys for the Irish Creek Railway began four days after incorporation of the South River Lumber Co. in April 1916



The logging railroad started at the South River Lumber Co. Mill in Cornwall and proceeded up Irish Creek and beyond.



South River Engine No. 3 works the log train with the loader.



The Irish Creek Railway utilized a total of five Climax B-Model locomotives with the first two being built in 1896. Most of them were acquired in 1916 after being regauged to fit the 42" temporary track.



South River Engine No. 2 waits at a log dump for work to resume.

The last cutting occurred during September 1938 near Crabtree Falls

All of the locomotives were sold or scrapped by 1943.



South River locomotive No. 5



MP 28 construction - Nov. 5, 1937

During construction of the Blue Ridge Parkway, the railroad grade was cut through in some places and in others it follows the same alignment as the railroad.



For further information and videos

The Flora, Fauna, and Soil of this Land is now slowly Recovering

QR for cell phones link to "Rock Train" video of present Climax operation

Do we incorporate some of this with the primary wayside display or make a smaller display plaque just for the dump car?

c.1905 Koppel Dump Car

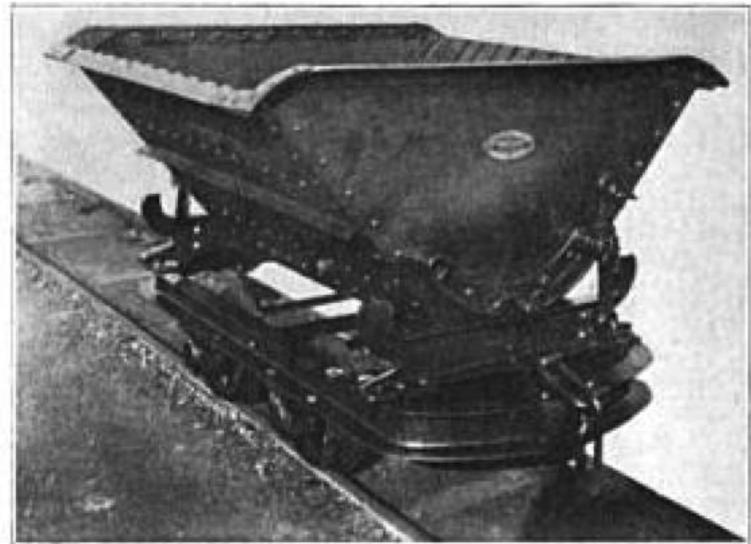
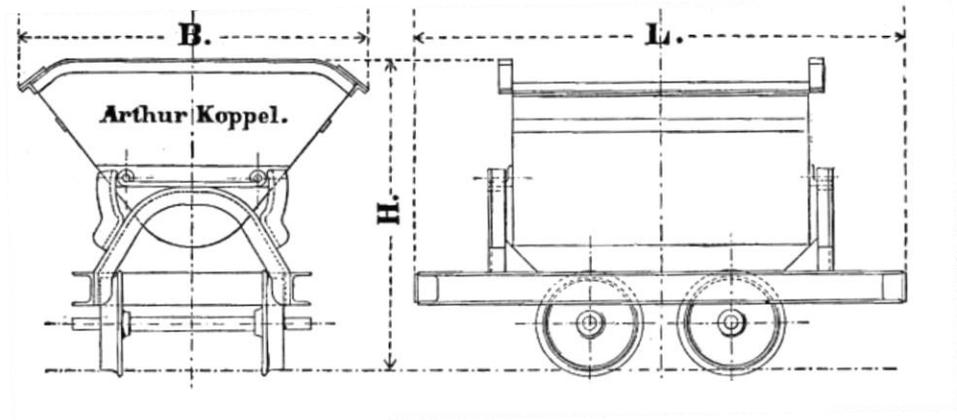


Railway Age Gazette
14 February 1913

Double Side Rocker Type Dump Car

The V-shape dump car of the rocker or cradle type has a capacity of 1 cu. yd. and runs on 24-inch gauge track. The underframe is a round bumper type, built of wide flanged channels. The wheels are cast steel and are carried in flexible bearings.

The car was manufactured by the Orenstein-Arthur Koppel Co. of Koppel, Pa.



New V-Shaped Koppel Dump Car.

The dump car was used to transport fill material, to preposition coal to other sites for fuel used by the locomotives and other logging equipment, and to ferry workers.